



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes

CHARTER SCHOOL REVIEW COMMITTEE

KEVIN INGRAM, CHAIR

Joyce Mallory, Vice-Chair

*Ruben Burgos, Melinda Scott Krei, Desiree Pointer-Mace,
Gayle Peay, and Glenn Steinbrecher*

CSRC Clerk: Jarett Fields, (414) 288-1540

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Wednesday, February 24, 2016

5:30 PM

City Hall, Room 301-B

Amended 2/23/16 - Item #5 was added

1. Roll Call.

Meeting convened: 5:32 P.M.

Members excused: Melinda Scott Krei and Gayle Peay

2. Review and approval of the minutes from the February 11th meeting.

There were 2 corrections to the minutes. In Item #5 - administrative matters - one new application for a charter school will be presented on March 10th, not voted on.

There's also a typo in part 3 - Children's RESEARCH center

Ms. Pointer-Mace moved, seconded by Mr. Steinbrecher, to accept as amended.

There were no objections.

3. [150630](#) Communication relating to the 2015/16 activities of Milwaukee Math and Science Academy.

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Ms. Susan Gramling, Children's Research Center, said that the committee already accepted the 2014/15 annual report and the school's probationary status was lifted at the February 11th meeting. The school has grown with its grades and the significant academic progress indicators show that the second graders do much better than the first graders. Over the past 3 years, the reading and math local measures have been in the 70% and 80%, with its being higher in math. They are working on reading. Both the student attendance and retention rate have increased over the past 3 years, while student enrollment (return rate) decreased each year during that same period. The first year of the operation of the school was 2011/12, when it earned a 59.2% on its scorecard (poor and failing) and in 2014/15 it ended at 72.6% (promising and good). Overall, the school is on track to meet or exceed its 2014/15 score card results, with one of the underlying issues being the stability of the staff and leadership, which has really improved under the current leader, David Chief.

Ms. Pointer-Mace suggested adding a chart that puts this school's score card in context with the other 9 charter schools. Ms. Mallory noticed that 2013/14 was a bad year all around in relation to student performance, staff turnover and leadership and questioned how this stability would be retained. Even if renewed for five years, the

school will still be reviewed annually and the contract can be amended if need be.

David Chief - Director of Milwaukee Math and Science Academy - the score card of 72.6% is too low for them and they are working on improving that score.

Crystal Bellmeier - Instructional Coordinator - went through the reading scores compared to the national average (tables referred to are in the file). The charts show that the students are growing through the years. For the most part, returning students are functioning at a higher level than the new students just entering the school.

Torva Henderson - school dean - she is there to stay, otherwise she would have already left. She handles the suspensions, both in-school and out-of-school. They prefer in-school suspensions because they can then know what the student is doing and provide quality instructions. As an administrator, they worked on supporting staff as much as possible.

The school also worked on telling parents that a problem child's behavior would not be tolerated in the next school year and that lagging students would also be addressed in terms of getting them up to speed.

John Highteeken - Concept Schools - Director of Accountability

Dr. Regina Armour - Director of New school Development and Community Outreach

Alleah Umas - Central Office - Human Resources with emphasis on teacher retention - Concept Schools

David Dissom - superintendent for west regions - Concept Schools

Mr. Umas said Concept Schools receives 10% of the school's annual income, with 55% of that going to cover the benefits and salaries of Concept School staff assigned to that individual school and the remaining 45% to assist the school and Concept Schools administration and activities. A handout was provided (contained in file 150630) detailing services provided. Concept staff works directly with the principals and, having 30 schools, they do purchasing for the schools for a reduced cost to the school and design school brochures and websites, as well parent newsletters.

Ms. Armour said that Concept Schools (CS) does its own assessments and events to support student learning, such as network-wide spelling bees, writing contests and math events, and science fairs. They also work on professional development of the staff.

Mr. Dissom said that once the school was put on probation, it became a priority for CS and CS worked on providing suggestions and supporting the school and increasing student outcomes. This support was provided at no additional cost to MMSA.

Mr. Chief said that each teacher will be responsible for visiting 8 students at home.

Mr. Chief is an employee of CS. Compared to the CS network, MMSA is in the top 10 for growth.

Robert White - parent of two MMSA students - his two kids are both honor roll students (K5 and a first grader) - creator of the Fatherhood Program at the school

John Marvin Lee - father of an MMSA student

Char Barlowe - special education coordinator at MMSA - she was there during the high staff turnover period and there was a lot of unhappy staff and life changes as well.

Larry Hoffman - he questions why Mr. Duman with CS is running schools all over the U.S. and he also provided a document with his calculations for the score card and extrapolation. Ms. Armour said Mr. Duman is a revered person and one of his missions is to help people understand the importance of education and problem-solving capacity.

Mr. Chief asks for a 5 year extension to provide staff members with job security, as well as the students with the security that the school will be there for them.

Mr. Steinbrecher moved, seconded by Ms. Mallory, to offer a 5-year contract. There were no objections, with Mr. Burgos abstaining.

4. [151603](#)

Communication relating to the 2016/17 activities of The Green School.

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*Dan Grego - TransCenter for Youth
Tom Schmidt - Milwaukee Green Acre with Will Allen
TranCenter for Youth currently operates 5 schools in the Milwaukee area, with one of those being Escuela Verde, which is in its fourth year of operation. The Green School is anticipated to be a school for the north side. Under the umbrella charter once the first school was open and was doing well, then a second school could be opened. The school focuses on environmental sustainability and social justice. Students set their own timetable to meet their graduation requirements. The Common Council unanimously approved opening the Green School. They are currently anticipating opening the school in August 2017. There will be no series of 3 grants from the state of \$200,000 each, which Escuela Verde had received to open. It was difficult to find the appropriate building for the school and now the problem being faced is finding teachers and staff. In the last year, they have been working with the Milwaukee Green Acre and would like to have the school located on that property. They do have building renderings. Mr. Grego is trying to find funders since the grants are no longer available. He hopes to have August 2106 to August 2017 be the planning year. If he cannot attain that, plans may change. He can come back to the committee in the fall to update them.*

5. [150804](#)

Communication from the Charter School Review Committee transmitting its 2014-2015 Annual Report.

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Mr. Jarett Fields read a statement, contained in file 150804, explaining why CSRC does not extrapolate data, as Mr. Hoffman did and presented at Steering and Rules Committee. The DPI standard is to not extrapolate and not to report data on any number of students fewer than 25 (CSRC uses 10 due to the small number of students at some of the schools). Members and Mr. Hoffman discussed his letter and the committee's response to that letter.

Ms. Pointer-Mace moved, seconded by Ms. Mallory, for acceptance of the written response. There were no objections.

Mr. Fields also brought up the posting of a school's score card in a conspicuous place at the school. Ms. Pointer-Mace said she thinks the parents wouldn't find it helpful as parents also consider public schools or choice schools, which would not post any score card results; this would only affect charter schools. Ms. Eroth suggested that maybe the schools be required to put their annual reports on their web sites. Ms. Pointer-Mace also liked the web site suggestion and make the CSRC annual reports consistent with the score card and how the totals were calculated. Copies of the reports could also be available at the school library or in another place in the school where parents could access them. Ms. Eroth will change the PowerPoint for the next Steering and Rules meeting.

*Meeting adjourned: 8:24 P.M.
Linda M. Elmer
Staff Assistant*